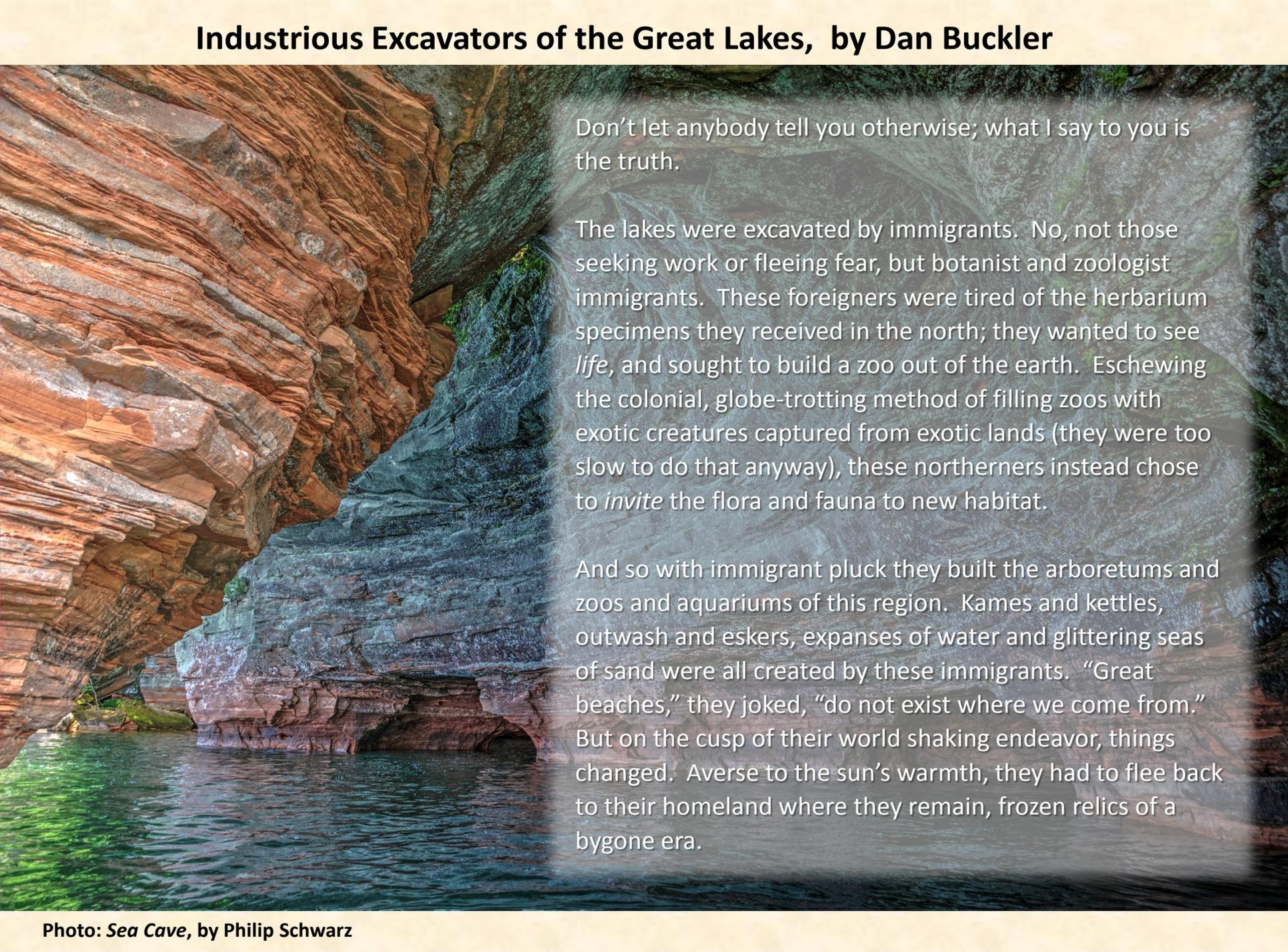


# Industrious Excavators of the Great Lakes, by Dan Buckler

A photograph of a sea cave. The left side shows layered, reddish-brown rock formations. The right side shows a darker, more textured rock wall. The bottom of the image shows dark water with some green algae or seaweed. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Don't let anybody tell you otherwise; what I say to you is the truth.

The lakes were excavated by immigrants. No, not those seeking work or fleeing fear, but botanist and zoologist immigrants. These foreigners were tired of the herbarium specimens they received in the north; they wanted to see *life*, and sought to build a zoo out of the earth. Eschewing the colonial, globe-trotting method of filling zoos with exotic creatures captured from exotic lands (they were too slow to do that anyway), these northerners instead chose to *invite* the flora and fauna to new habitat.

And so with immigrant pluck they built the arboretums and zoos and aquariums of this region. Kames and kettles, outwash and eskers, expanses of water and glittering seas of sand were all created by these immigrants. "Great beaches," they joked, "do not exist where we come from." But on the cusp of their world shaking endeavor, things changed. Averse to the sun's warmth, they had to flee back to their homeland where they remain, frozen relics of a bygone era.